



Typical of South Jersey architecture is this Woodbury home of Ann Cooper Whitall, who sat at spinning wheel during Battle of Red Bank.

WOODBURY - SWEDESBORO

*Located on Two of the Jersey Turnpike's
Interchanges, Historical Gloucester County
Towns Offer Much to Interest Visitors*

BY JOHN T. CUNNINGHAM

Staff photos by Porter.

EVERYTHING about the land which is now Gloucester County made it certain that settlers need go no further once they reached those fertile shores on the banks of the Delaware River. Navigable streams reached into the interior, crops grew quickly in the soil underlaced with rich marl and markets in Philadelphia developed rapidly. The ample life has been found in Gloucester for at least 325 years.

Now, by way of the New Jersey Turnpike, Gloucester County is relatively close at hand (only about two hours away from Newark). It's a region worth visiting—rich in centuries-old history and rich in modern farms and suburban towns.

Two of the Turnpike's interchanges are within the county, at Woodbury and Swedesboro. Today's trip chooses the Woodbury exit (No. 3). Straight ahead at the interchange, signs point to Route 42, which is followed to the first traffic light, where a right turn is made for Woodbury.

Along the way the traveler notes the extensive orchards and the sprawling fields of tomatoes and truck gar-

den vegetables. Metropolitan Philadelphia looks to Gloucester for part of its food. Indeed, so productive are these fields that Gloucester each year stands among the nation's top counties in tomato production.

WOODBURY, county seat of Gloucester, has much to offer the sightseer. Its streets still bear the heritage of the English settlers who came with John Wood in 1684. Close to the prosperous up-to-date business center is a cluster of buildings dating back to early in the 18th Century. Broad street, the main artery, is part of the old King's Highway from Burlington to Cape May.

Oldest of Woodbury's many historic buildings is the Friends Meeting House, built in 1716 and enlarged in 1783. Ivy covers the impressive 2½-story brick building and old trees shade the yard and burying ground.

Across the street from the meeting house is Paul's Hotel, built in 1720 from surplus bricks ordered for the meeting house. The hotel is still in service, but additions and changes



WOODBURY—Gloucester County Court House, built in 1787, has old world appearance. It was remodeled along present lines in 1885.



SWEDESBORO—Trinity Episcopal Church, originally a Lutheran house of worship for Swedish settlers, has been a landmark since 1784.



have all but obliterated its original lines. During the Revolution, when Hessian soldiers were badly beaten at nearby Red Bank, the hotel was known as "The American Defeating the Hessian" inn.

MUCH of Woodbury's past and present is clustered within the shadows of the county buildings at the corner of Broad and Cooper (or Delaware, west of Broad) streets. The brownstone, steeped county court house is in marked contrast with the colonial court houses found in most New Jersey counties. Built originally in 1787, the court house was remodeled along its present lines in 1885.

The visitor will be struck with the street's appearance diagonally across from the court house. Old houses set close to the sidewalk are little changed in the 200 years since they were erected.

Best known of these structures are the Lawrence House, now the headquarters of Gloucester County Historical Society, and the Cooper House, former home of John Cooper, a member of the Continental Congress, the Committee on Correspondence and the Council of Safety.

THE Lawrence House was built in 1765 and later became the residence of John Lawrence, brother of Capt. James Lawrence of "Don't give up the ship" fame, who resided with John and attended the Academy School in Woodbury. Historical treasures now fill the building, including the desk of Elizabeth Haddon, 20-year-old Quaker girl who founded nearby Haddonfield in 1710.

Famous though John Cooper was, his house today is more known because it sheltered Lord Cornwallis when he was in Woodbury from November 21 to November 24, 1777. Deep slashes on interior doors and frames were made by British bayonets.

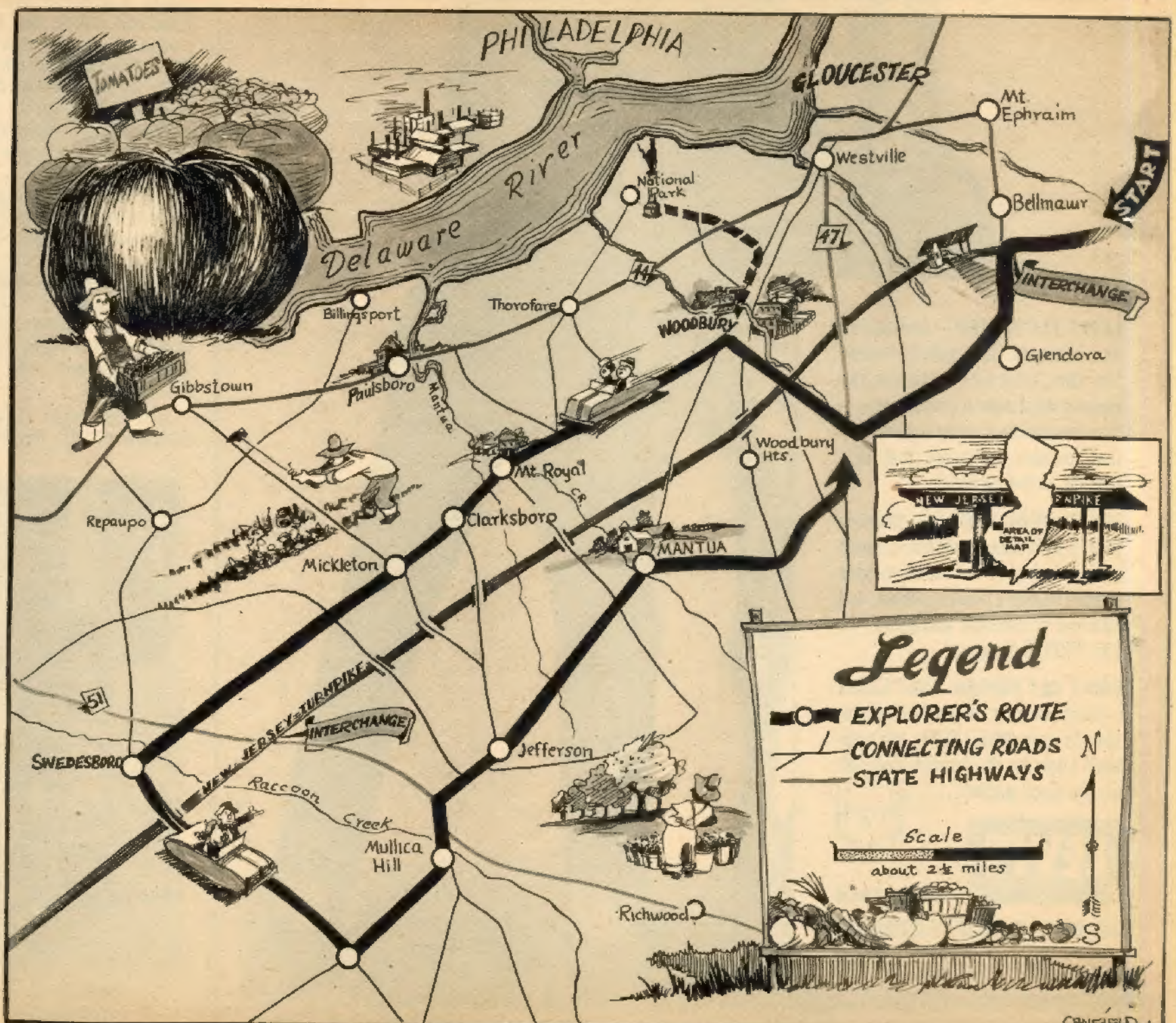
Also worth a visit in Woodbury is Friendship Firehouse on Delaware street near the county buildings. Firemen willingly show their 153-year-old hand pumper and their old horse-drawn steamer, both still in perfect condition.

A FEW miles northwest of Woodbury is the Red Bank Battlefield, a shrine to one of most bitterly fought battles of the Revolution. It's worth a visit for reasons other than its historical associations, since its broad green lawns overlook the Delaware River and offer the viewer an oppor-

Mantua Creek at Mantua, one of navigable streams which made Gloucester County products available to Philadelphia markets.

RIGHT: Friends Meeting House, built in 1716, is the oldest of Woodbury's historic buildings.

BELOW: Picturesque Gloucester County is a scant two hours out of Newark in today's "explore" via the New Jersey Turnpike.



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Let's Explore:

WOODBURY-SWEDESBORO



Shrine at Red Bank Battlefield, northwest of Woodbury, overlooks industries on the Delaware River.

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AMERICA'S FINEST OVERALL



(Cont'd from Preceding Page)

tunity to see some of the industrial growth mushrooming through the lower Delaware Valley.

Still, the battle is the thing. Plaques on the towering monument in the park tell of the storming of Fort Mercer on October 22, 1777, by more than 2,000 Hessians. Inside the fort Col. Christopher Green and his ragged and underfed forces waited through a bombardment and held their fire until the Hessians were at point-blank range. The short, sharp battle resulted in an overwhelming defeat for the Hessians. When they withdrew they left 600 soldiers and 36 officers dead or dying outside the fort. Fatally wounded was their commander, Count von Droop. The victory was achieved at the cost of only 37 Americans.

Nearby is the house where the brave Quaker woman, Ann Cooper Whitall, sat spinning through the battle. Finally a cannon ball smashed into the house and fell in the room where she was spinning. Mrs. Whitall was moved—but only to the cellar where she continued to spin. After the battle the wounded were treated in the house.

VIEWING the sights in Woodbury and at Red Bank can consume time, but if the traveler wishes to see more of Gloucester County the trip to Swedesboro is recommended. Woodbury's Broad street forks right to become Salem avenue, the route to Swedesboro.

All the way, through the villages of Mt. Royal, Clarks-

boro and Mickleton, lush farmlands stretch away—as they have since the Revolutionary days when Gen. "Mad Anthony" Wayne foraged through these lands for food for Washington's army. These are the lands, too, which thrilled to the sight of the still-discussed Gloucester Fox Hunting Club of pre-Revolutionary War days.

Swedesboro, on the banks of Raccoon Creek, was settled by the Swedes in 1642. The first settlers called their community simply "Raccoon" and not until much later were the original inhabitants honored. Center today of an active farm territory, Swedesboro is best known to tourists for handsome Trinity Church on a bluff overlooking Raccoon Creek.

THE graceful white Trinity spire can be seen far off as the motorist approaches on King's Highway. Tall buttonwood, maple and cedar trees hide the ivy-covered brick walls of the church, however, until the viewer is in front of the structure. The Swedish Lutheran congregation built the church in 1784, but Old Trinity became an Episcopal house of worship after the passing of the Swedish mission in 1789.

Homeward-bound, the motorist can shorten the way by getting on the Turnpike near Swedesboro, or he can return by way of Route 45 to the Woodbury Turnpike entrance. The latter route is more scenic, the glimpses it offers of the villages of Mullica Hill and Mantua are rewarding and the time consumed isn't much greater.



Woodbury's Friendship Firehouse company puts 153-year-old hand pumper through its paces.